



# **Research and Reference Service**

**OVERSEAS REACTION TO THE CUBAN SITUATION**  
**(As of 3 p. m.)**

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**This is a research report, not a statement of Agency policy**

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**SUMMARY**

The restless and uncertain shifting moods of worldwide editorial comment reflect the sensitivity of opinion to the rapidly developing point — counterpoint statements by the U.S. and the USSR. Although a cautious optimism over the possibility of a negotiated settlement prevails, in some areas an awareness that the showdown was yet to come dampened such optimism. Comment covered in this report was too early to indicate any responses to the latest Soviet and U.S. statements on the terms of reference for negotiations.

Western European comment eagerly canvassed for possible means and terms for negotiations as it was acutely aware that a showdown was close. The temporary relief was shaken by the developing situations and continued support for the U.S. was based largely on hopes that it would follow a moderate course and that the Soviets would dismantle the missile bases in Cuba.

Latin American support remains firm but the Argentine press notes that further U.S. action might be necessary. Communist and leftist demonstrations though sensational have been largely ineffective because of firm police control.

Middle East and South Asian comment continued to express relief that the two chief protagonists were willing to talk it out in the UN Security Council. U.S. NATO allies in the areas viewed the negotiations as a victory of U.S. determination, while in some Arab countries and South Asia the development was attributed to Khrushchev's desire for peace. Some Indian papers related the Sino-Indian border troubles to Cuba and wondered if the Soviet Union spoke with two voices.

Editorial comment in the Far East tended to shift its interest to the crucial issue of dismantling the missile bases in Cuba. U.S. allies in the area lent their full support to the U.S. position on such bases. The press of neutral Burma viewed low-keyed understanding of the U.S. position. Although the Japanese press indicated its concern over the issue, it failed to take a position.

No significant comment from Africa was available.

Soviet propaganda continued its efforts to create the contrasting images of a peaceful Soviet Union and an aggressive U.S.

56

## WESTERN EUROPE

Deepening concern that the ultimate moves in the Cuban crisis still lay ahead cast its shadows over the brightening scene of temporary relief that thus far military confrontation had been avoided. As West European media became more aware that the Cuban issue was headed for a showdown, possibilities for negotiations were ever more eagerly canvassed. Continuing support for the Administration's position was largely based on hopes that its moderate course of action, coupled with that of the Soviet Union, would lead to a dismantling of missile sites in Cuba by diplomatic means. Even before the Khrushchev offer of a quid pro quo arrangement, there was speculation as to the possible course of negotiations, with some reference to a bilateral deal. In some instances it was even suggested the Soviets might have engineered the Cuban crisis in order to bring up for debate the issue of the dismantling of all overseas missile bases.

French papers took the lead in warning the Administration not to be misled in believing that the first round of the U.S.-USSR confrontation -- now generally conceded a victory for the President -- was likely to be followed in short order by other successes. Influential left-center PARIS-NORMANDIE, Rouen, whose editorials are widely quoted, said flatly: "Let us not count our chickens before they are hatched. If Khrushchev did not decide to jump, it may be because of prudence and wisdom, but also to obtain invocation of a conference during which the problem of all bases cannot fail to be brought up." Moderate left-wing PARIS-JOUR offered this ominous warning: "Let Kennedy beware. It is not at all certain that he will win the second round. The Soviet leader is a sly fox who knows better than anyone how not to lose face and to transform an initial failure into success."

The demand for a negotiated settlement rose in proportion to the likelihood of stronger U.S. action in the Cuban crisis. The Labor DAILY MIRROR, London, observed that "the Cuban crisis has brought the world to the brink of war" and expressed hope that "the shock will in-

spire Kennedy and Khrushchev to negotiate more realistically than they have in the past." The conservative and very influential ECONOMIST, London, pointedly referred to "the aims of those who prefer settlement to showdowns should clearly be to steer the course of events toward ...negotiation, at whatever level necessary."

Similar views were held on the Continent. The Flemish nationalist STANDAARD, Brussels, spoke of "the shock treatment likely to bring about a diplomatic settlement." The paper then went on to make specific reference to a possible quid pro quo arrangement. "This speculation can only be successful if a formula is found permitting the Russians to pull out of Cuba in exchange for a similar American action in another part of the world." Other papers pointed out that the USSR had as many bases outside its own territory as had the U.S., but had in addition developed the Cuban sites "to get a good price" (conservative RESTO DEL CARLINO, Bologna).

U.S. military intervention in Cuba was still considered a definite possibility, but many papers made it clear that they disliked this alternative. French media and informed opinion thought that the U.S. would have a difficult time justifying before UNGA any forcible action, all the more so as the U.S. had ringed for so long the Soviet Union with missile bases. Conservative LE FIGARO, Paris, declared "suppression of Cuban missile bases is [the Administration's] major concern. While hoping for a peaceful solution ...in its absence the U.S. may be compelled to intervene directly.... One hopes that it will not be driven to that extremity."

Continuing support for the U.S. was clearly contingent upon its moderate attitude in dealing with the crisis. The limited blockade was considered a perfectly justified defensive measure and U.S. demands for Soviet guarantees concerning withdrawal of all offensive missiles from Cuba were generally supported. On the assumed advantages of the quarantine over stronger measures independent LE SOIR, Brussels, remarked "other more drastic steps have been envisaged... Mr. Kennedy finally chose the quarantine because it leaves sufficient margin for negotiations." The conservative YORKSHIRE POST, Leeds, which consistently supported the U.S. in the present crisis did not rule out negotiations but asserted: "President Kennedy is right to refuse to negotiate with the Russians until he can absolutely be certain that Russia's aggressive strength in Cuba will not continue to be built up while lengthy negotiations are taking place."

## LATIN AMERICA

Heavy coverage by all the media continues in the Hemisphere. General support for the US remains firm. Material support from those countries which had made earlier offers is becoming more concrete. The Argentine press feels that "further" action may be necessary. Opposition by Communists and leftists has been largely ineffective and controlled by firm police action. Cuban media are attempting to demonstrate that the world supports the island nation.

In general, public sentiment remains firmly pro-US throughout the Hemisphere, and in some cases is growing. For example, influential El Mercurio of Santiago, Chile, called for a diplomatic break with Cuba by the remaining five members of the OAS "in the shortest time possible." And in Brazil, influential O Jornal of Rio de Janeiro editorialized that President Goulart (who does not fully support the US) is "badly circled with counselors and advisers who are Communists who would betray him." Some Argentine newspapers saw the possible need for "further" action by the US. The Buenos Aires Herald said in an editorial that "if a UN Commission can remove the Cuban bases it is better to have it that way than action by American bombers. But the job has to be done quickly." Rosario's La Capital approved the US action because "the blockade of Cuba was an immediate necessary step; further more serious measures hinge on defense requirements." La Gaceta of Tucumán, in calling for unity in the Hemisphere, recognized the hazards involved. It declared that "there should be no hesitation" on the part of the Hemisphere which is "faced with the sad alternative...of what might be the 'last war among men'."

Official actions continue to show strong support for the United States. Argentine naval units have been ordered to sail Sunday to Caribbean waters and to place themselves under US command. A second Ecuadorean congressional resolution in two days was issued supporting the US action, and the Costa Rican Congress voiced its approval of President Kennedy's action "on account of having reached a decision which guarantees the democracy of America...." The Uruguayan Government instructed its UN delegate to support the US project on preventive measures vis-à-vis Cuba, and Bolivia decided to resume its seat in the OAS due to the international crisis "created by the Soviet Union in Cuba."

Sporadic demonstrations, some violent, have occurred but do not appear to be expressions of a shifting public opinion favorable to Cuba. Most opposition efforts have been rather effectively controlled by local police forces. Some pro-US demonstrations have occurred. Only in such countries as Brazil and Chile (which still maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba) do the demonstrations seem to exert some influence on public opinion. Other opposition included a resolution passed by the Chamber of Deputies of Bolivia which condemned "repressive US measures against Cuba without OAS consultation [first]." According to a wire service news release, in Brazil a leftist labor organization threatened to boycott American ships in Brazilian ports unless the blockade is lifted.

In Cuba, the crisis continues to receive heavy play in the press and radio. There is no perceptible change in official or public attitude. A speech by Defense Minister Raúl Castro on October 26 made no reference to Soviet military aid support, although he said that an attack on Cuba would undoubtedly lead to a world war. Havana's Radio Rebelde reported on a rally held in Havana on October 26 to celebrate the arrival of the first Soviet vessel to pass "through the imperialist blockade." Press comment continues to stress the theme of world support for Cuba. El Mundo (Havana) referred to U Thant's mediation efforts as reflecting a "demand from more than forty neutral nations that view with understandable alarm the possibility that the Yankee aggression against Cuba could wreck peace." There has been no Cuban reaction to the Khrushchev statement (October 27) that the USSR would withdraw offensive weapons from Cuba if the US would withdraw from its missile bases in Turkey.

## FAR EAST

Still heavy straight news coverage focused on events at the UN and the latest U.S. policy statement while moderate editorial coverage shifted its attention to the key issue of the Cuban missile sites themselves. Far East allies of the West gave unqualified support for the dismantling of the sites, while the press of neutral Burma continued to voice a low-keyed understanding of the U.S. position. Japanese media, although greatly concerned over the missile site issue, failed to comment upon it. Key media in Cambodia and Indonesia, evidently following the lead of national leaders, maintained silence on the crisis.

### Coverage

Straight news coverage is slightly reduced from yesterday's pace but still heavy, with attention focused on events at the UN and the U.S. statement that the quarantine will continue. Editorial comment continues at a moderate level. Hong Kong's pro-Chinese Communist press has concentrated on the Sino-Indian border conflict, while the Cambodian press, which has yet to comment on the Cuban crisis, similarly grants precedence to the border conflict. It is still too early for area reaction to Khrushchev's Turkey-Cuba rocket site dismantling proposal.

### Missile Sites Dismantling

Editorial comment appears to be shifting away from speculation on the type of negotiation to alleviate the crisis, with the emphasis clearly still on talks under UN/U Thant auspices, to second-stage thoughts on the key issue of the continued existence — and build-up — of the Soviet missile sites in Cuba. Opinion available from anti-Communist press sources in South Korea, Thailand, the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Philippines, indicates unqualified support for the U.S. insistence that the existing missile sites be dismantled before any lifting of the quarantine. The anti-Communist Chinese language paper Shih Chieh (Bangkok) thus forcefully stated that "the only way to solve the crisis peacefully is to dismantle the missile bases in Cuba and to destroy the Castro regime", while the 1.5 million member Korean Veterans Association called upon the UN to supervise the withdrawal of all offensive weapons from Cuba.

The Japanese press, in particular the "Big Three" (Asahi, Mainichi, and Yomiuri), failed to comment Saturday morning on the latest developments of the situation, but concern over the problem of the missile sites was evidenced by the questions fired at the Cuban charge d'affaires in an October 27 press conference. During the past two days the tenor of Japanese media comment has become somewhat more constructive, with a noticeable decline in the volume of carping, quibbling comments. Qualifications remain ever-present, however, in any support given the U.S. position.

Understanding of U.S. policy continues to emanate from carefully neutral Burma, where the pro-government Guardian acknowledged that the confrontation was brought about by the Castro regime's willingness to become a missile base hostile to the U.S. and Latin America. Neutral Hanthawaddy (Rangoon) even went so far as to say that the U.S. action was understandable since Cuba has more missiles than it needs for defense, and therefore should permit inspection. Encouragingly, pro-Communist Botataung (Rangoon) complained that it was virtually alone in carrying the "facts" about the U.S. "aggression".

#### The Silent

The press of Cambodia, in the absence of guidance from Prince Sihanouk, continues to maintain editorial silence on the Cuban crisis. Similarly, the official organ of Indonesia's ruling PNI, Suluh Indonesia, has yet to voice an opinion on the issue, evidently following the lead of President Sukarno who stated diplomatically on October 24 that "the world situation at present must be closely studied by us".

#### Communist China

Peking, whose attention has been preempted by the Sino-Indian border fighting, reported the U.S. determination to continue the blockade, but as yet has not had time to comment on the latest Soviet proposal to the U.S.



## NEAR EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Relief that both parties are willing to hear each other out across the Security Council table continues to keynote press and public opinion in the Near East and South Asia. America's NATO allies saw in this negotiation a victory for U.S. determination and firmness and a backing down by the Soviet Union. In South Asia and some Arab countries, however, Khrushchev was given credit for this as an indication of his desire for a peaceful settlement. The Arab press has continued to urge the elimination of all military bases. Some Indian papers pointed to the "coincidence" of the Cuban and Sino-Indian border flareup and the contrast between Khrushchev's stand on the two issues: He continued to send arms to Cuba while demanding that India settle its dispute through negotiation.

Popular and press support for the U.S. action on Cuba continues in the Near East and South Asia to be strongest in NATO Turkey, where the public and media consider themselves very much involved, and in NATO Greece. Israel, too, is solidly, though fearfully, behind the U.S. A considerable segment of Lebanese opinion, including official opinion, supports the U.S. move, and this is also probably true of Iran. The rest of the area opposes the blockade, war-like gestures, military bases and "American obstinacy" in language that ranges from regretful to obscene.

Both President Kennedy's firmness and Premier Khrushchev's lack of it were welcomed in the Turkish press, which saw hopeful signs in the fact that both parties had turned to the U.N. Neither side wants a nuclear war, said Istanbul's widely circulated Milliyet. The Greek press similarly welcomed the U.S. "shift from a passive role to one of active leadership," since the language of power was the only one the Communists understood. But at the same time Greeks expressed relief that the matter appeared to be taking a pacific path. Cyprus, too, considered the U.N. role encouraging.

Lebanon's media and government have so far shown no excitement over the interception of a Lebanese ship headed for Cuba.

Pro-West L'Orient of Beirut pointed out to the pro-Nasser Lebanese newspapers that their demand that all military bases be abolished and the blockade be called off was a pro-Soviet rather than a neutralist one. Other pro-UAR papers went so far as to call Khrushchev the "apostle of peace."

Media, public opinion and the official line in the UAR, Syria, Iraq and Yemen have continued to urge liquidation of all military bases, the lifting of the blockade, recourse to the U.N. by both parties, and that the United States abide by the principles laid down in the U.N. Charter. The nonaligned (Belgrade) states are being urged to take the initiative in working for world peace. In this group, Syrian opinion has been least antagonistic to the U.S.

South Asian press comment has continued to be largely critical of the U.S. Khrushchev was termed more reasonable than President Kennedy by the conservative and influential Hindu of Madras in that the Russian had ignored American provocations. The Hindu admitted, however, that the U.S. had cause to be disturbed and fearful about the missile base in Cuba. Other papers pointed out the contrast between Khrushchev's handling of the Sino-Indian border dispute and the Cuban situation. In the former he wanted the Indians to negotiate a border settlement since "the Soviet Union believes Chinese aggression justified." Equally critical Pakistan papers saw no difference between Soviet and American military bases.

## SOVIET BLOC

Moscow's voluminous propaganda exhortations against U.S. actions regarding Cuba continue unabated. Soviet media's current incessant emphasis on the need for the U.S. to heed "the voice of reason" and abandon its "reckless" policy reflects an apparent Soviet hope to generate world public opinion against the U.S. quarantine. Propaganda thus attempts to create an image of an aggressively-inclined U.S. which has "assumed the role of the world's gendarme" and whose "irresponsible" actions can instigate a nuclear war, as well as an image of a threatened Cuba.

Prior to Khrushchev's offer to President Kennedy to withdraw "offensive means" from Cuba in return for withdrawal of U.S. missile bases from Turkey propaganda on U.S. military bases abroad had been played down in output -- an approach which can be expected to be reversed now. Pravda on October 26, for instance, charged that the real threat emanates, not from Cuba, but from U.S. "aggressive" designs on Cuba and the American network of foreign bases. A further indication of Moscow's propaganda on this issue is in today's Red Star, which held that since the U.S. "demands the removal of Soviet military equipment from Cuba which has been supplied exclusively for defense purposes," then doesn't the USSR have the right to demand that "American equipment and troops be removed from the hundreds of military bases set up around the Soviet Union."

While Moscow continues to refrain from specifically committing itself to Cuba's support, it apparently has increased its efforts to provide Soviet morale support for the Cubans. There are indications that Radio Moscow has increased its daily one-hour program, specifically designed for Cubans and inaugurated last month, to ten hours daily. A typical broadcast was introduced: "Cuba! We will not abandon you in misfortune!" and was followed by a condemnation of the U.S. and repeated assurances that the Cubans have a "faithful friend" in the USSR.

The Bloc's heavy output, like Soviet propaganda, is pointing up the "sharp contrast" between U.S. "aggressive" actions and the USSR's "peaceful" reaction. Khrushchev's letter to Bertrand Russell is widely reported. However, Satellite commentary, patterned after its Soviet counterpart, is not stressing the call for a high-level conference. Instead, it is currently playing up the importance of U.N. deliberations in the dispute.